1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
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penalty was not only enforced against improper marriage, but even against illicit intercourse on the part of persons within the forbidden limits. Mr. Lyon related to me a case that occurred since he has been living in the country, where the power of the Chief Chirimo was insufficient to protect a man who married his second or third cousin. Fortunately for the delinquents, they succeeded in making their escape, though with difficulty, being followed two or three days' journey by the avengers. 582 684

Infidelity is not rare, and the husband has the redress of whipping the woman and dismissing her if he desires, and of whipping her paramour if he is able. But so cautious are the people about the blood limit of intermarriage, that a woman on giving birth to an illegitimate child, for fear that it will not know the family to which it belongs, will usually brave the punishment, and at once confess its paternity. 837 684 [848]

As cousins are called brother and sister, so are not only the brothers and sisters, but even the cousins of a wife or husband all called indiscriminately brother and sister-in-law; so that a person may on a single marriage find that he has annexed fifty or a hundred of these interesting relations. 601

On the death of the head of the family, the next oldest brother, or in default of a brother, a cousin or uncle assumes his place, and is then called father by the children. This does not involve any especial material duties, such as the support of the family; but is rather a sort of honorary title; giving him, however, the ruling voice in any family council or discussion. 593 768

On the death of an individual; if a young person, a woman, or a person of but little consequence, the body is prepared as soon as possible in the manner described below, and carried to the forest; but if a person of more consideration, there are some preliminary ceremonies. These I had the opportunity of witnessing in the case of an old man who died on the Uren when I was present. He belonged to one of the distinguished families, an ancestor, perhaps his father, having been one of the leaders in the war with Tiribi, and he the heir to, and possessor of, one of the few gold "eagles," or insignia of rank. He died in the night, and next morning, the body being in his hammock, covered with a piece of bark cloth; all of the chicha, chocolate, and food that the poor people of the house could get together on short notice were prepared. A fire was lighted, amidst singing, by twirling a pointed stick in a s cket on the face of another. This was the sacred fire, which was communicated to a small heap of wood placed on one side in the house. This could be used for no common purpose whatever. No ordinary fire could be lighted from it; not even could one use a stick of it to light his pipe. It must burn continuously for nine days. In case of its accidentally going out before that time, it must be relighted in the same manner as at first; and at the end of that time, only a priest could extinguish it, and he only with a calabash of chocolate, and during, or at the end rather, of the suitable incantation. 764 766 [372] [784]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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ing, after the fashion of the Chinese. Below this, the stick is plain. I tried every means in my power to obtain this, but could not buy it." 293

The stick, which was seen by the writer, is still unobtainable.

Gold Ornaments.—Pendants of gold were formerly worn as chiefs' insignia, and, it is said, were also given to successful partisans in the Tiribi war. They are now nearly a thing of the past, as the whites have long eagerly sought and purchased them. These ornaments were made in the form of eagles (sometimes double-headed), alligators, and frogs, and were worn as breast-plates or gorgets. They no doubt were entirely similar to the antique forms from the graves at Las Mercedes. Señor Ricardo Fernandez Guardia[17] reproduces a photograph of Antonio Saldaña, father of Ramón and last "king" of the Bribri, with several large gold eagles round his neck. These eagles are also noted by Gabb.[18] 301 [622]

As the Bribri believe that death will overtake the Indian owner who sells one of these gold ornaments, it may be that there are really more of them in existence than the 784 [763]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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784 natives will admit. This penalty may be avoided, however, by calling in the services of the nearest shaman, who removes the taboo, or *búkuru*, by blowing upon the object and singing certain songs to the accompaniment of his medicine rattle. The following day it may be handled and disposed of with impunity.

226 *Fish Traps.*—Fish are taken by blocking small tributaries of a river and stranding them, by shooting with arrows or catching them in traps. Unfortunately none of these processes was observed, but pl. XXIX reproduces a photograph of a tributary of Coen river across which a temporary dam had been made to divert the course of the stream and leave the fish high and dry.

481 At this point we may mention the Bribri method of crossing swollen streams by means of the ingenious device of weighting themselves with heavy stones borne on the shoulders (pl. XXX). The writer did not have the good fortune to witness this performance, but we are enabled to introduce the accompanying illustration through the

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Examples of these, in both stone and pottery, were found frequently in the graves at Las Mercedes. The stirring is done with a stick called *molinillo* (pl. XIX, *e*).

Meat is eaten fresh, either boiled or roasted, or is dried for future consumption.

CEREMONIES

Very few ceremonies are now performed by the Bribri, and of those that survive, most are mortuary in their function. None of these ceremonies were witnessed personally, but descriptions were obtained from Ramón, and from several other Indians whose identity was not learned, as these people have a form of the taboo against mentioning their names. A so-called "ceremony," *La Chichara*, which usually precedes an important undertaking, such as house-building, seems to be nothing more than a general chicha-drinking bout.

Death Ceremonies.—When a Bribri is near death, he is removed from his house to a small hut set up at a distance from the camp, because if he should die in his lodge,

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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766 "The warriors among the Bri-bris, who fought in the war with the Tiribris were honored with a little different ceremonial. They are now all gone, and the ceremony is extinct. At the death feast, a person entered, clad in a long gown, wig, and mask. The gown and wig were made of mastate, or bark cloth, covered with 'old man's beard moss,' sewed all over it, making a shaggy and nearly shapeless mass. The mask was made of half a 'tree calabash,' properly fixed up with a wax nose, &c. A copy of this entire dress was made for me by an old Indian, and is now in the Smithsonian Museum [pl. xxx]. The person thus accoutred, took part in the dance, made free with the women and scared the children without let or hindrance. Mothers with young children took them to him and placed them for a moment on his shoulder, 'to prevent the evil spirit from doing them harm.'"

784 *Tabu.*—On going into Bribri houses we frequently were earnestly warned by the Indians not to handle certain objects, as they were *bukurû* or tabu. On inquiry it was learned that it was customary for an Indian who wished to leave home to pronounce certain charms over his valuables, which then became *bukurû*, or tabu, not only to others but to himself, until a shaman was summoned to remove the spell by blowing upon them and singing to the time of his

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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sacred rattle. Thus we were sometimes obliged to wait several days until the tabu was removed before we could buy various objects. This removal, of course, required that the shaman be paid a fee, sometimes equaling or exceeding the price we paid for the object. We were also given to understand that some forms of *bukurú* were limited as to time, and expired automatically at the end of a fixed number of days after the charm was pronounced, without the aid of the shaman. Several times, blowguns which had their orifices stuffed with feathers or down were observed, apparently to indicate that they were tabu. Small objects were also placed in hollow bamboo tubes and the ends closed with feathers in order to safeguard them. 784

Gabb[21] seems to have gathered a somewhat different idea, for he says: 783

"There are two classes of uncleanness, *nyo* and *bu-ku-ru'*. Anything that is essentially filthy or that was connected with the death of a person is '*nyo*,' anything unclean in the Hebraic or Hindu sense is *bu-ku-ru'* . . . . *Bu-ku-ru'* emanates in a variety of ways; arms, utensils, even houses become affected by it after long

[P. 26(A)]

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Past	Present	Future
5 days past *skfLi*		5 days after today *skfiki*
6 days past *térik*		6 days after today *teriki*

805
192

[TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P. 26(B)--ANALYST]

LIFE CYCLE

784 [182] [756] [184] [609] All events of life are bound by tabus and fear, and of necessity these occasions require the aid of the medicine man. Even on the Pacific slope where custom is less rigid, certain prohibitions and laws continue, although they are not freely discussed nor is their practise admitted to strangers.

843 **Pre-natal.** Both Gabb [98] and Pittier [99] have called attention to the fact that the Bribri believe that an unborn child can be influenced by certain objects seen or objects worn by the woman around her waist. This is not limited to the Bribri, however, but is also characteristic of the Cabécar. In addition to the information given by the above-mentioned authors, there are many more superstitions, some of which are cited below. Pregnant women cannot participate when certain types of poison are used for fishing (*see* Fishing), [753] nor can they cut cacao trees. If they cut such a tree, when it is time for the child to die, he will wilt from the waist down in slow agony and will then require the aid of a medicine man to die (*see* Curing). A pregnant woman cannot eat from a pot, only from a leaf or a plate. If she fails to obey this rule, her child will be stupid or stricken dumb and not even the medicine man can cure him. If she eats [825] *perico ligero* (sloth) it means that her family will be valiant and hard to kill. If the man is an *okym* (*see* Death), he cannot bury while his wife is pregnant. There is also the belief [761] that the first time a girl is in this state someone has to die. Occasionally, therefore, the family of a dead person search for a girl in her first pregnancy and a fight with her family ensues. [184] This does not happen on the Pacific side.

[262] Tapir meat is tabu. Some months before birth, the medicine man gives the expectant

[TEXT CONTINUES MIDDLE OF P. 26(B)-ANALYST]

[98] Gabb, 1875, p. 494.

later. Here it is necessary to note, however, that certain vestiges of traditional customs persist, at least among the Bribri of Cabagra. When a person has been dead and buried a year, he is exhumed and replaced in the same grave.

Official Participants in Death and Burial Rites. There is an elaborate group of officials connected with death and burial rites even today. Each division requires certain preparation by the individual taking part in the rites. In a sense, these participants can be classed as lay clergy. These "professionals," if so they can be called, are of utmost importance when one realizes that the dead are strictly tabu to the non-initiated. If, by any ill luck, a person should touch someone dead, a three-day purification ceremony is absolutely essential or misfortune will befall him. This is true of both slopes of the range.

The principal figure in these rituals is the medicine man, known in Bribri and Cabécar as the *jawá* (*see* The Medicine Man). Next in importance today is the Burier (*see* The Buriers) who handles and wraps the dead. Then follow the Singers (*see* The Singers) whose place is now generally taken by the medicine man as well as that of the Preparer of Feasts. A medicine man, particularly on the Pacific side, functions in all of these positions. Among the Cabécar, there is a minor group known as the *já*, and among the Bribri the *ǯarichək*, who need no special training but who prepare the things for the dead to take with them *without* touching the body.

The preparation and position of the medicine man is treated under religion because in addition to his curing abilities, he personifies the last remaining vestiges of former credences and priesthood.

The other officials in connection with death and burial have duties concerned solely with these operations. They do not seem to form part, as has been said by some, of the priesthood, but do have a decided social position because of their task.

The Buriers. They are known as *ókub* or *ókum* in Bribri and *keri* in Cabécar. They are the only people, aside from the medicine man who is all important, who can touch the dead. They must also light the funeral fire. They are the only non-clergy who can touch a buzzard or a possum.

755 The stones are also consulted for curing and
787 for prophesying the result. When one of the
sia is confronted with a question concerning
[776] the life or death of a person it contacts *sibu* who sends *duLar*, his messenger, with the answer. *duLar* is very special, however. No one, not even the greatest medicine man, has ever seen him. He confers with the stone and disappears when the doctor talks to it. Some medicine men say that they have heard his presence in the sense that in the dead of night, when waiting for an answer, there is sometimes a sound as that of a small chick.

● 784 **Tabus.** *bukLú* is a bad spirit or spirits (*see* Theological Beliefs). It also denotes uncleanli-
[776] ness and is analogous to tabu[149] in both
[783] Cabécar and Bribri and is of utmost importance. If one leaves his house alone it becomes *bukLú* and if it is his bad luck to return ill, then it is very dangerous. The only way to remedy this among the Cabécar is to go all around the house, touching it with a stick, and then to do the same to everything inside. The Bribri do this with their hand. The ceremony is called *itiuk* (to wake up) in Bribri and *kviok* (to frighten) in Cabécar.

[881] The first menstrual period is particularly
[841] *bukLú* (*see* Puberty) although no woman is ever free from tabu during this condition. A
[845] pregnant woman is supposedly possessed by
[783] this evil which requires a medicine man to cure or cleanse after birth. If by malfortune she
[752] should be bitten even by a harmless snake, the *bukLú* in her compel her to die.

[825] Vestiges of an elaborate totemic organiza-
[779] [TEXT CONTINUES TOP of P. 47(B)-Analyst]

173 **Recent History—Wars.** A fine line is drawn
726 between legend and actual history. Events are reflected in both. In 1959, the medicine men of the Cabécares still recount their version of war with the Térrabas or Terribís which took place at the beginning of the 19th century.[150] The following is an Indian account of this event.

[TEXT CONTINUES BOTTOM OF P.47(B)—Analyst]

[149] Gabb, 1875, p. 499; Pittier, 1938, pp. 21–22; Skinner, 1920, pp. 102–105.

[150] *See* Gabb, 1875, pp. 488–89. Although Gabb does not mention the Cabécares in this war, it should be

6:Stone E-5 (1956-1959)1962
[P.47(B)]
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Bribri
Terraba

784 825 779 224 tion are still evident in many tabus pertaining to animals. Among the Cabécares, all animals have a plant name which is used when a hunt is planned. One does not say that he is going to hunt a given creature. He announces that he is going to look for yuca or *tiquízque*, as the case might be. This is to deceive the protector or *dueño* of the animal so that the game will not be warned. Each sickness is associated with a distinct animal and is believed to be sent by *ditegLa*, lord of illness. The toad is associated with a sickness that causes pain in the stomach, loss of weight, coughing, and then death. The first women in the world had this illness. A medicine man passed the toad over them as a cure. It is bad to touch a toad. The *duriwak* clan of the Bribri cannot touch toads nor possums. In fact, the Buriers (*see* Death) are the only persons who can touch buzzards or possums. They are allowed to kill the latter. The *kor'wak* clan of the now extinct *korrebué* or Singers could not eat nor touch tapir because it was the reincarnation of their ancestors. The *sənítswa* and *múnúLiwa* not only cannot eat this today, but the *múnúLiwa* must even change their direction if they see tapir tracks. Bribri women and children can only eat this meat if it has first been smoked and then cooked by an old woman. Macaw meat is tabu to women and to men belonging to the Bribri clans of *duriwak*, *saLwak*, *kor'wak*, *kúmburwak*, *sulariwak*, *and ruLgikwak*. Before other men can consume it, macaw has to be prepared in a special pot and the partakers have to wash their hands.

FOLKLORE

The War between the Cabécares and Terribís

(*Cabécar*)

173 726 *sibu* left *sibuLetá*, the green mountain, in Cabécar. It was the time when people wore only loincloths of *mastate*. Many Terribís (Térrabas) suddenly appeared to kill the

remembered that these people were under the dominance of the Bribri, and according to Cabécar tradition definitely took part and suffered in these raids as the version cited denotes.